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21 Jun 2018



The SNP has been accused of lowering standards of education by assessing pupils as having attained required standards – even when they've failed their course.

Earlier this week the SNP government hailed its own report showing attainment in literacy and numeracy had exceeded 90 per cent.

However, at First Minister's Questions today, Ruth Davidson revealed the measure by which children are assessed has been changed.

The Scottish Conservative leader pointed out that it used to be the case that a pupil would have to pass a course in order to obtain a literacy and numeracy achievement.

Now, according to guidance set out earlier this week, a youngster can achieve a pass at National 4 level by only succeeding in a single unit.

Examples of this include a unit at National 4 English where a child can "listen to and watch TV ads".

Literacy and numeracy used to be measured by the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN), which has now been cancelled, having last been published in May 2017.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The SNP has spent the week patting itself on the back over literacy and numeracy rates.

"But under its own new rules, a pupil is deemed to have met those required standards of attainment, even if they fail English and maths.

"The First Minister keeps telling us she wants to boost standards.

"But instead, the SNP has cancelled surveys, rigged the stats and lowered the bar for literacy and numeracy.

"It's no wonder parents don't trust the system.

“The SNP has been utterly complacent on education, despite Nicola Sturgeon claiming it is her top priority.

“It is ludicrous for the SNP government to change the bar so literacy rates are met without pupils being equipped to spell properly, or numeracy achieved without pupils being equipped to add properly.

“The nationalists aren’t interested in restoring Scottish education to levels of global excellence, and instead want to massage the statistics to make themselves look good.

“It’s a disgraceful approach which is harming the prospects of generations of young people.”